1: Heimann--1 F-4, 5 (1895-1930) 1932 SD6 Cayapa SD6

THE CAYAPA INDIANS*

by
Max Heimann

In the far north west of the Ecuadorian Republic there is a river named the Santiago. Near the village of Borbon it is joined by one of its tributaries, the Cayapa River. The Cayapa Indians, a harmless tribe consisting of no more than 2500 persons, live on the upper reaches of the Cayapa River and around its sources.

I have never been able to understand why they are called "uncivilized" and "savage." Would it be because they dress more simply, more comfortably, more suitably and cheaply than we European fashion slaves? Or would it be because they speak their own language, unknown to us, and because they do not know how to read and write and do not stuff their heads with the dead weight taught in schools and called "education"? Or even, would it be because they have other customs and manners as well as different moral concepts?

One thing is certain--the Cayapa are happy people, because they are more satisfied with their lot than we Europeans, who are so demanding and feel so superior with our conceit in our sham civilization, in the clothes prescribed for us by the tyrants of "fashion" and in the "wisdom" acquired in schools.

They frequently come to town in small groups of five to 20 persons. I have seen them many hundreds of times, but again and again I am delighted when I meet these small, but well-built and sturdy [282] figures. The men are not taller than 150-160 cm. (Translator--5 ft. to 5ft. 4 in.), while the women are barely 140 cm. (Translator--4 ft. 8 in.). Their skin is copper brown in color.

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* The author a business man, lived in Tumaco (southwest Colombia) for 35 years (1895-1930) and was German Vice-Consul for the Departamento Nariño from 1907 to 1920. Although he never actually visited Cayapa villages, he did have occasions to see and question groups of them "many hundreds of times," on their frequent visits to Tumaco. Apart from this, several of his employees have been in Cayapa villages and have given him reports. (K. Th. Preuss).

142 Their bodies are clean, and I have never seen a Cayapa who had a
[515] rash or boils, and only few who had scars. Their hair is thick, bristly
[302] and dull black in color; the beardless men wear it semi-long to the
nape of the neck, while the women let it hang loose and open so that
it not only covers their backs and ears, but in part even their fore-
291 heads and cheeks. Their clothes are extremely modest. The men
wear a sleeveless, shirt-like, loose gown, which usually reaches to
the hips only, but is sometimes longer, reaching to the knees, in
which case it seems to be the holiday attire, and it looks richer hav-
ing a border of differently colored cloth. These clothes are made of
thin, very bright and cheap cotton materials. On special occasions
292 they even dress in gala clothes, which differ from their every-day
531 clothes in that they are decorated with straight lines or zig-zag de-
301 signs of shells. In addition they may deck themselves out in their
177 most precious ornaments consisting of two to ten long necklaces made
of multi-colored glass beads as well as (at least from their point of
view) especially beautiful neck and arm ornaments consisting of the
cardboards 6 cm. wide so well known to all of us, with a whole gross
of ordinary porcelain shirt-buttons on each just as they were delivered
by the European manufacturers. But even among them there are
292 dandies and fashion hounds, who manage to pick up a useless old
177 black waistcoat somewhere, which they then decorate with a lot of
white shells and buttons, wearing it as a sort of open vest over their
red or blue shirts. But imagine the happiness of the young man who
in addition to this splendor, has managed to acquire a stiff round felt
hat. No matter how shabby, battered, greasy and much too small it
may be on his fat pate with the thick mop of hair, he is proud of his
elegance and would not change places even with the governor. The
622 Gobernador de los Cayapas (Governor of the Cayapas) is one of their
177 chiefs, of which each village or district has one—yes of course—he
292 is a great gentleman—he can afford it—he not only wears a shell
301 bedecked waistcoat over his red cotton shirt, but over it still another
long, black morning-coat, which he has bought from or been given
by Don So-and-so, because it had become too tight, unfashionable
or shabby for the latter. And around his neck and wrists he wears
especially wide cardboards with buttons in proportion to his dignity.
Naturally it would be considered unseemly for a governor to come to
town without suitable head-gear, even if it be only a self-made straw
panama hat for lack of a black felt hat. But even he does not wear
[293] trousers or shoes, which are considered superfluous and burdensome;
instead he carries in his right hand a wooden stick five feet long with
a silver knob as a symbol of his position and power.

437 They have sold the new small canoes, tree bark mats
[501 (damajaguas), palm-leaf fans, rubber and rolls of liana (these are
285 used in the construction of bamboo huts to tie up the palm-leaves
283] on the [284] roofs and for some other purposes in lieu of string),
which they have brought from the villages and with the cash they
have earned they now make their small purchases. They have
few wants and do not need much: a few feet of cotton cloth, a
chopping knife, some salt, a small mirror, glass beads, fish hooks,
[411] powder and small shot for the old muzzle-loader which a few of
them may own. This would be all their heart desires. It is little,
even very little, and yet it takes long, even very long, until they
have made their choice and finally decided to buy. First they
talk it over among themselves in their guttural and sónorous lan-
guage and then they start bargaining, and then they count out their
money slowly and cautiously; finally having managed to get the
[462] desired goods, they packed them into the nearly full basket car-
ried by the wife. The women and girls timidly hide behind their
576 menfolk. When spoken to, they do not answer, although they
571 understand sufficient Spanish. Their jealous menfolk have strictly
[191] forbidden them to enter into conversation with men of other races
or tribes. They draw back bashfully. But if the husband is not
present, only the mother or brother, the women become very
loquacious, especially when their tongue has been untied by a
small present—a mirror, necklace or something of the kind. And
they are happy beyond words if you caress their little child, who
looks like a Japanese baby painted brown, and has a friendly smile
even for a stranger. It is amusing to watch the women meeting a
fashionably dressed lady in one of the shops; then they surround
her laughing, amazed and admiring, but they do not appear to be
jealous of the lace dresses worn by European women. The men,
on the other hand, do not honor even the most beautiful and most
elegant white lady with so much as a glance.

142 The Cayapa girls are pretty from the age of 12 to 16 years,
302 their bodies somewhat plump, but still with a beautiful shape.
584 Sometimes young men and women can be seen with red and black
streaks and dots on their faces, chest, arms and legs; this is a
sign that they are engaged.

505 Once their business in town is finished they prepare for the re-
turn journey to their villages. "Adios compadre, adios compadres,"
and chattering and laughing, happy and content, they hurry to
the shore where their canoes are moored. On their way they

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
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HARVESTING CANE

[p. 62(A)]

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

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YOUTH IN ORDINARY COSTUME

[p. 62(b)]

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

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MAN AND WOMAN IN EVERYDAY DRESS

[p. 12(c)]

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

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A TYPICAL FAMILY GROUP

[p. 62(0)]

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

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WOMAN WEARING NECKLACE AND BRACELETS

[p. 64-A]

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

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WOMAN WEARING DOUBLE MANTA

[p. 69(2)]

3: Barrett E-S (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

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WOMAN'S CUSTOMARY COIFFURE

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

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SINGLE MANTA AND TASSELED GIRDLE

[p. 64(D)]

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

A FAMILY GROUP

PAMPLET CAYAPA INDIANS

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[p. 64(F)]

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

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FIESTEROS AND CHURCH AT PUNTA VENADO

BARRETT—CAYAPA INDIANS

[p.64(F)]

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

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YOUNG MEN DRESSED FOR FIESTA

[p. 64 (6)]

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

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A TYPICAL HAIR-CUT

[p. 64(H)]

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

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FIESTA COSTUME

[p. 64(1)]

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

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FIESTA COSTUME COMPLETED WITH A VEST

[p. 64 (J)]

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

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FIESTA COSTUME WITH FOREIGN HAT

[p. 66(A)]

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

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FIESTA COSTUMES

[p. 66(B)]

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

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BOY DRESSED FOR FIESTA

[p. 66(c)]

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

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BOY DRESSED FOR FIESTA

[p. 66 (D)]

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

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FIESTA COSTUMES

[p. 66(E)]

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

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FIESTA COSTUME

[p. 66(?)]

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

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FIESTA COSTUME
[p.66 (b)]

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

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FIESTA COSTUME

[p. 66 (6)]

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
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BOYS DRESSED FOR FIESTA

[p. 66(1)]

J: Barrett E.-5 (1908-1909)1925
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[p. 66(3)]

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD 6 Cayapa SD6

are certain differences of age, the girls being on the whole somewhat older than the boys. To obviate this a computation has been made in which the last 13 measurements of boys (nos. 5–17) only have been taken. As it happens, these measurements are of individuals more nearly of the same age of the thirteen girls measured, and the element of extreme youth among the boys is thus eliminated. This computation gives an index of 86.04, which still leaves the index of the boys much nearer that of the women than that of the men, the differences being 0.71 and 2.46 respectively. 141

It would appear therefore that the head proportions among the adult females differ very little from those of childhood, while in the males the head has a marked tendency to elongate with advancing years.

While dealing with the physical characteristics of the Cayapa it should be noted that in certain of those outward characteristics which are most manifest to the eye, the individual differences are very great. The hair varies from jet-black to a very dark-brown in color, and from absolute straightness to a very pleasing waviness, though in no case is there any near approach to curliness. It is ordinarily fine, though among the men some individuals are found whose hair is moderately coarse. These features are, of course, more noticeable in the women that in the men, since the women always wear their hair long and flowing, whereas the men keep their hair cropped fairly short, though in earlier times they too wore long hair. In many cases the women's hair reaches to the waist, and is very full and heavy. Such, for instance, is the case with the middle-aged woman 142 142 302

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD 6 Cayapa SD6

shown in pl. xx. Under ordinary circumstances most women wear their hair full-length in this way, but frequently a case (as in pl. xix) is found where the hair is comparatively short. This is due to the custom of cropping the hair on the death of a relative. An example of waviness of the hair is given in the case of the woman shown in the latter plate. The hair in this case is dark-brown. With advancing years the hair tends to become thinner, but no case of even partial baldness was observable either among the men or the women. Throughout life the hair retains its color in almost every instance, but rarely a person is seen who shows a sign of grayness, and one old man was found whose hair was white—it had become thus many years before, though no one knew the cause. No other individual with white or even partially white hair was encountered, and it was claimed by the Indians that the old man referred to was the only individual in the tribe who exhibited this peculiarity. The fact that the hair retains its color so well is probably due to the fact that the Cayapa practically never wear any form of head-covering.

Considerable variations are found in the form of the nose. In some it is wide and rather flat toward its tip, this appearance being due to a considerable distension of the nostrils, the openings of the nostrils being in many cases quite round. However, it escapes completely any approach to the true mongoloid type from the fact that in no case is there such a lack of bridge as is found in the real mongoloid nose. In fact, the contrary is quite the case, and in many instances the bridge is quite high, giving the nose the impression of slight aquilinity.

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD 6 Cayapa SD6

One individual was observed whose bridge was quite high and aquiline, though this was a decided exception. In these high-bridged noses the actual width of the nose at the alæ is usually somewhat less than in the more monogoloid type above mentioned.

So far as noted, the eyes are invariably dark-brown, and the upper lids often show more or less of the mongoloid fold. In some instances this fold is so marked as to give the eyes a perceptible slant. In many other individuals, on the other hand, the fold is so slight as to be almost unnoticeable, and the eyes are wide and frank in consequence. In most cases the supraorbital ridges are not at all prominent; the forehead therefore appears full and is also fairly high. Now and then is found an individual, especially among the men, whose supraorbital ridges are fairly pronounced. The eyebrows are usually black, but are only moderately heavy.

In almost every case the malars are high and prominent, and the general appearance of the face as a whole is round, though now and then is seen a person whose face gives the appearance of much greater length than breadth.

In the majority of individuals the upper lip is fairly broad and heavy, though the lips are in no case unusually thick. In most instances the chin has moderate prominence, though it never shows any special degree of protrusion.

No opportunity was presented for actually weighing any individuals, but from their general appearance it may be said that as a rule they tend neither to obesity nor to thinness. Now and then slightly obese or slightly

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6

• 142 spare individuals are found, but as a rule they are in that state which would be termed "in good flesh." It is noticeable, however, among the very young children that there is a marked protrusion of the abdomen. In most cases this may probably be ascribed to the fact that their diet consists very largely of green plantains and that they devour these in quantities at all times of day; however, it must be said that no illness seems to result from this practice. As the children advance in years this protrusion of the abdomen grows less, and during the greater part of their remaining years they are well proportioned in every respect. Now and then is encountered an old person who tends toward protrusion of the abdomen in declining years, but these instances are exceptional.

In color the Cayapa are a fairly light reddish-brown. They are, in fact, much lighter than the average of the North American Indians, and it seems probable that the climatic conditions under which they live have at least something to do with this particular feature. As was stated in speaking of the climatic conditions in the Cayapa country, the sky is almost continuously overcast, the sun rarely shining brightly for more than a few minutes at a time. Even these short intervals of sunshine are very infrequent, sometimes weeks and even months passing without full sunshine. Furthermore, the Cayapa region is almost windless. While rains are practically of daily occurrence, they are almost never accompanied with wind or other storm features. Tanning from sun or wind is therefore practically impossible so long as the Cayapa remain at home.

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD 6 Cayapa SD6

142 484 An interesting example of the possible differences in skin color is shown, however, when any of the Indians journey to the coast, and especially if they voyage a considerable distance at sea, which they frequently do when some of them have occasion to visit Tumaco or Esmeraldas. On such occasions they take their canoes [505] out to sea and paddle, skirting the shore-line for a considerable number of miles. The trip from Limones to Esmeraldas necessitates a journey of about fifty miles on the open sea, and ordinarily requires at least a week. [292] For such trips the Cayapa usually dress specially, in that they put on extra necklaces, neckbands, and wristbands, and otherwise ornament themselves for the occasion. Their tight-fitting neckbands and wristbands are never taken off while they are away from home, consequently the portions of the skin covered by them are protected from the influence of the elements. When they return home, however, this finery is usually taken off. The 142 contrast between the covered portions of skin and the exposed parts is striking, even though the intervals of sunshine along the coast are practically as infrequent as along the river. The sea breeze has a marked tanning effect, consequently the traveler returns home almost as brown as many of our North American Indians who are subjected to sun and wind during much of the year. The covered portions of the skin, however, remain the same color as when the Cayapa leaves home, and it is therefore possible to contrast the natural color with the tan. No color charts were available for purposes of comparison and exact record, but the differences between these two tints are considerable and show the natural color of the Cayapa, as previously mentioned, to be

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
SD6 Cayapa SD6
Cholo

142 much lighter than that of the average North American Indians.

In a word, therefore, the Cayapa may be said to be a well proportioned, though somewhat undersized, light-brown people, with brachycephalic heads, black or dark-brown hair which varies from straight to wavy, to show considerable variation in the shape of the nose, to have very dark-brown eyes, wide upper lips, full and fairly high foreheads, high cheekbones and round faces, and to have supraorbital ridges and chins that are not at all prominent.

No opportunity was presented to measure the few Cholo who live on the Rio Cayapas. They are, however, of quite a different type from the Cayapa, being somewhat shorter and more thick-set than the latter, and as a rule more mongoloid in general appearance. In pls. CXL-CXLII are shown two boys, two girls, and one young man of about twenty-one years, all members of this tribe.

Measurements

In the accompanying tables the following abbreviations are used:

St, Stature.
Sie, Stretch of arms.
Sh, Height of shoulder (acromion).
Hmf, Height of middle finger from surface upon which heel rests.

of the current. Those going up-stream hug the bank as the pilot digs the tip of his oar blade into the bank, or if the channel is shallow enough, into the bed, and then, placing both hands about ten feet up the oar handle, he shoves back, sending the canoe ahead.

Farm land lies at varying distances back from the river. Each house is backed by a clearing which is used for garden crops or sugar cane. The main farm lands extend back from the river from one to three miles. Flat land is at a premium, and the cultivators work up and down the many hills.

Cayapa Physical Appearance. Although no systematic measurements were made, it was apparent from gross observations that Barrett's (1925:408-445) measurements are still valid. He described the Cayapas as short:

> . . . the men averaging only 155 cm. and the women only 146 cm. The range of individual variation among the men, as also among the women, is 14 cm. Among the men there are at least a few individuals who appeared to be somewhat taller than the maximum here given, but as a tribe the Cayapa must be considered somewhat below average in stature (Barrett 1925:409).

They appear to be mostly brachycephalic. The hair is thick, coarse, black and straight; their skin, light

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brown. A few of them are tatooed on the arms and the blue of the ink stands out very clearly. Mongoloid characteristics such as the epicanthric fold, the Mongoloid spot, and high cheekbones are very common, but in contrast to the Mongoloid nose, the Cayapa nose is often bridged. Occasionally one finds individuals with very high-bridged noses of aquiline shape. Their eyes are uniformly dark brown, and the whites are seldom clear but have a brownish tinge that would seem to indicate a high incidence of liver disorders. Most Cayapa, especially the women, seem to be somewhat round-faced. The men, while short, are very well-proportioned and have tremendous strength in their arms and shoulders which probably stems from their technique of canoe handling. As a rule, the women are thick-waisted, the result, perhaps partly at least, of their characteristic canoe handling. They generally paddle in a seated position, using a very short paddle, which requires many rapid short strokes for effective maneuvering, and they necessarily have to lean forward to make efficient use of the short paddle.

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Clothing and Adornment. Many men are quite